

MICHAUD SECURES CRITICAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR MAINE

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The bill specifically directs the Secretary of the Navy to allocate sufficient funding from amounts available to ensure the continuation and successful implementation of the Navy's Human Resources Call Center pilot program in Washington County, Maine.

"I have been fighting to get this directive included in the bill for months and couldn't be more pleased with this great news," Michaud said. "This means jobs and economic development for Washington County. This area has been hard hit economically and this is the kind of news we needed to build on a great success story for our workforce there."

In addition, Congressman Michaud secured \$4 million in funding for his request for the Maine Institute for Human Genetics and Health (MIHGH). The Institute's three partnership institutions - Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems (EMHS), The Jackson Laboratory, and the University of Maine Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences - intend to attract nationally ranked scientists, research grants, students and faculty. This Institute is considered a natural progression of the pioneering work created by these three entities to help lower health care costs. Congressman Michaud secured an additional \$2 million in the Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Appropriations bill for the project.

"This Institute will make Maine a leader in medical research and put us on the cutting-edge of technology," Michaud said. "This kind of investment is a big and bold step for Maine, helping to confront the challenges of the future, creating jobs and economic opportunity in our area."

In addition, the bill includes \$2 million for the U.S. Army Center of Excellence project in Orono, to continue research on advanced structures and composites for force protection. This funding would develop new construction techniques for bomb-resistant temporary living quarters for troops in the field.

"Dr. Habib Dagher at the University of Maine has really impressed the Army and appropriators with all he has done with past funding for this project," Michaud said. "This funding is a testament to all the great work that the University of Maine is doing to help create materials that use the natural resources of our state and that benefit our troops."

Also included in the bill is \$5 million for a Mark V Patrol Boat Replacement Craft Prototype for the Navy and \$50 million for DDG-51 modernization. BIW is the shipyard that is the lead developer of the DDG-51 program, meant to improve the operational effectiveness of destroyers already in the fleet by reducing crew size, life cycle operations and support costs.

"I pushed for the inclusion of this funding in the bill," Michaud said. "I'm thrilled that the Defense Appropriations Committee recognizes the quality workforce and products that the state of Maine is making for our national defense."

"I will work closely with the Maine delegation to make sure that this funding remains intact and is delivered to these valuable Maine projects," said Michaud.

The Senate is expected to consider the measure next.

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